.21: Fisher S-4 (no date) 1950 M1 Middle East
Badouin MJ4

Strict discipline, necessary both in everyday routine and because of liability to attack, has left its mark on Badawin ways of thought. In religion, there is little room for compromise or doubt—a strong, vivid, and intolerant faith is held. Similarly, there is a strict code of behaviour. Hospitality, in an environment without fixed routes or settlements, is a highly regarded virtue, and ordinary social intercourse has been developed into an elaborate code of manners and conduct. In view of the vagaries of human existence amongst the Badawin, it is hardly surprising that superstition and fatalism are also strongly marked. The operation of the 'evil eye' and malevolent spirits is seen in everyday life—nothing is praised directly without attributing its excellence as due to God—and men and animals wear charms.[1]

Possibly as a result of reduced physical strength, and their enforced preoccupation with household tasks, the status of women is low. Although not veiled, like the women of the settled areas, Badawin women are regarded as in all things the inferiors of men. It may be significant that among pastoral communities, religious deities are regarded as masculine in attribute. Only in the religious systems of non-pastoral peoples do we find female deities—mother-goddesses of wide influence—with a corresponding rise in importance of women above the level of mere drudges and bearers of children.

Though Badawin life is hard and unrewarding, those who follow it value it highly. A true Bedu looks down with disdain on other ways of life, particularly that of cultivators in better watered districts, for whom he often has a profound contempt as effete and subservient. Despite their own strict social organisation, the Badawin can contrast the dull routine of agricultural practice, and the looseness and self-indulgence of city life with their own courage, independence of thought, abstemiousness, and mobility.

Nomadism is a special response to environment, by which the frontier of human occupation is pushed farther within a region of increasing difficulty. In the past, nomadism has often been regarded as an unsatisfactory alternative to agriculture; it was believed that primitive man passed from a life of hunting and collecting first into a stage of pastoralism, and later, in places where conditions were favourable, to the fullest development of a life based on cultivation. In the opinion of H. J. Fleure and others this view must be modified—pastoralism may, in some instances, represent a special, later development *from* agriculture—a dynamic response to environmental

[1] Even Arab taxis in the cities carry a charm on the radiator.

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

Drinking muddy water or infected water is another cause, especially among those who go off to the Haj. It is pitiful to see the numbers of men and women who return from the Pilgrimage with dysentery, colitis, and so forth.

Constipation, of course, is very common.

It must be clearly understood that only the fringe of this interesting subject has been touched upon, but enough, I hope, to show that the most crying of all needs in Arabia to-day, and especially among the Badawin, is good medical attention, hospitals in cities and travelling motor clinics, which can move about among the nomad population and treat them in their homes. The medical branch of the American mission (Dutch Reformed Church) for long established in the Persian Gulf, has done wonders, but much, much more is required.

One of the most interesting features of the Badawin's attitude towards sickness, and especially wounds and sores, is his firm belief that certain pleasant smells or scents have a directly harmful effect on the progress towards recovery. It is in consequence a common sight to see Badawins entering the town of Kuwait, etc., with their nostrils stuffed up with dirty pieces of rag, inserted in the form of "plugs". A sufferer religiously keeps these in his nose until such time as he can escape out of the town again. The "smell of a woman", as he calls it, is a particularly dangerous form of scent to a wound, etc.

If a man is recovering from smallpox, on the other hand, it is believed that certain human smells, and certain foods, have a highly beneficial effect on the convalescent. He does not, however, know what this food is, or what particular person's odour will help him, so he goes out to receive visits of all the women in the neighbourhood, and is given every possible change of diet, in the fond hope that he will accidentally light on the right thing to effect a cure. This treatment was tried for Nazzal al Rashidi's illness in 1932.

In my various wanderings among the Badawin, I have always carried a few common medicines, notably of a purgative kind. These have always proved useful. Aspirin too I have found invaluable. As strange though it may seem sun-headaches appear to be fairly common among tribal folk, especially among the women.

Simple Fractures are dealt with fairly satisfactorily by the Badawin. He understands the use of splints, and usually before putting the